College Update

“Community colleges are charged with preparing the next generation with the vocational and technical skills necessary for the nation’s economic success, but, equally important, they should prepare that generation to assume their civic responsibilities as participants in a modern democratic society.” Donald Generals, VP Academic Affairs, Mercer County Community College

The above opinion piece from Community College Week says something which almost everyone in higher education, including all PCC employees, would agree with. Even though the first question we often ask of students is “What’s your major?” and we promote career exploration and job skills development in all our programs, we are all involved in educating the whole person, from reading, writing, computing, and analyzing, to critical thinking, teamwork, and problem solving. This is the ultimate “success” for students and our community which is the key word in our college mission. General education courses play a vital role not just in career preparation, but also life fulfillment and service to community, region, and nation. Our graduates have become leaders throughout the state and beyond, from teachers and public service employees to businesspeople, PCC faculty and staff, and even members of our Board of Trustees and PCC Foundation.

I say this because we must continue to work together in all we do as a team of faculty and staff in many departments to serve students. This is at the heart of the SACS accreditation process, including the development and implementation of our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), “Academic Advising and Career Planning.” The QEP will be a project on which we will focus for five years, and it will require continual coordination between faculty and staff as well as specific departments across the College. The end products will be the degrees and certificates of our students and, perhaps more importantly, their active and responsible roles in our communities for years to come.

We have seen one excellent example of this coordination and teamwork in the Developmental Mathematics pilot this spring. Pitt is seen as a true leader across the state in this area, and Hilda Barrow, Dean Stephanie Rook, and VP Pamela Hilbert presented to the State Board of Community Colleges in March on our work to date. I know that many faculty and staff have participated in this effort. The upcoming early registration periods for summer and fall terms will present additional challenges, but I am confident we will learn much from the experience. We will continue to study the outcomes of these changes and make adjustments to promote student success. I thank everyone who has contributed.

**Recognitions and Accomplishments**

- The Greenville Noon Rotary programs in March featured a number of our faculty/staff to this important group. Presenters included: LaTonya Nixon and her TRIO/EOC staff; Andre Gregory, Dan Mayo, and the Fulbright Visiting Scholars;
and Larry Spell, PCC Symphony Orchestra Director and Coordinator for Music and Drama. Thanks to VP and Fellow Rotarian Donald Spell for organizing and leading this month’s presentations.

- Jay Shingleton, PCC Police Captain, completed the Law Enforcement Executive Program of NC State University, one of only 22 graduates in 2012.
- Dean Donna Neal and Elaine Spencer learned that we received accreditation from the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology.
- Marguerite Stephens and Lynn McCormick were recognized as “exceptional employees” by the National Society of Leadership and Success for their support of our students as advisors of the local student chapter.
- Nicholas Vick, TRIO English Specialist, will deliver a presentation on Woody Allen’s films at the ECU’s English Graduate Conference and UNC-Wilmington’s English Conference.
- Student Ambassadors Tamsey Evans and Adam Wainwright assisted with the Greenville Museum of Art’s Fine Arts Ball. Trustee Don Mills is on this Board.
- David Lusk, Mary Paramore, and Susan Nobles were instrumental in our receiving a grant through the WorkReady Community Initiative from NC’s Eastern Region for Career Readiness Certificate testing for 150 students.
- Charles “Coach” Coburn, whose service as basketball coach and athletic director for 14 years prompted naming of the Coburn Center in the Ed and Joan Warren Building, was honored in a special “retirement” ceremony (from baseball umpiring) on March 10. VP Susan Nobles served as MC and local dignitaries included County Commissioner Eugene James and Judge Joseph Blick, Jr.

There have been many causes for celebration over the past weeks – the Academic Excellence Awards, the PCC Foundation Scholarship Roundup, the Woman of Substance lecture and awards, SGA’s Spring Fling among them. Don’t forget the Employee Appreciation and Service Awards evening on Friday, April 20. As of late last week, only 140 employees have made reservations, and the deadline is approaching. Please join us at Rock Springs Center to honor our award winners, retirees, and many others. The food and fellowship is outstanding!

I hope your spring is going well. I appreciate your support of students as they progress toward completion of this semester and, in many instances, achieving a degree or certificate at the May 11th Commencement Ceremony.

G. Dennis Massey, President